

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 036908

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 036908

LIMDIS TOSEC 474

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OREP, VS,CB

SUBJECT: CODEL TO VIET-NAM AND CAMBODIA

FROM HABIB

1. CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO VIET-NAM AND CAMBODIA IS TAKING SHAPE, ALTHOUGH SOME PROBLEMS REMAIN TO BE RESOLVED. CURRENT COMPOSITION, AS FAR AS CAN BE DETERMINED AT C.O.B. TUESDAY, INCLUDES: SENATORS CLARK, BIDEN, GARN, LAXALT, BARTLETT, AND POSSIBLY JOHNSTON; REPRESENTATIVES MCCLOSKEY, CHAPPELL, CEDERBERG, HARKIN, FRASER, KEMP, FLYNT, ABZUG, FENWICK, AND POSSIBLY ONE OR TWO OTHERS. IN ADDITION, AS MANY AS TEN STAFFERS WILL PARTICIPATE.

2. IN DISCUSSION WITH MEMBERS AT MEETING THIS AFTERNOON WE MADE IT CLEAR THAT ACTIVITIES IN VIET-NAM WOULD BE ARRANGED AS GROUP DESIRES. THEY HAVE A LONG LIST OF ACTIVITIES IN WHICH THEY INDICATE INTEREST, SOME FOR GROUP
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 STATE 036908

AS A WHOLE, OTHERS FOR INDIVIDUAL INTERESTED MEMBERS. IN

ADDITION TO BRIEFINGS BY THE EMBASSY AND MEETING WITH PRESIDENT THIEU, SOME IN GROUP ARE ANXIOUS TO MEET PRG REPRESENTATIVES, TRAVEL IN-COUNTRY, VISIT PRISONS AND INTERROGATION CENTERS, MEET POLITICAL OPPOSITION, SEE REFUGEE SITUATIONS, LOOK INTO MIA-POW ISSUE, MEET WITH US PRESS CORPS, AND CONTACT VIETNAMESE BUSINESS AND ACADEMIC LEADERS. I ASSURED GROUP THAT WE WOULD SEEK TO SATISFY ALL OF THESE SUGGESTIONS, WITHIN CONFINES OF ANY SECURITY PROBLEM THAT MIGHT BE ENTAILED. IN ONE DAY IN CAMBODIA GROUP WILL MEET WITH LON NOL AND GKR LEADERS AND VISIT APPROPRIATE PLACES IN SMALL GROUPS AS POSSIBLE GIVEN SECURITY SITUATION.

3. ONE THORNY PROBLEM WHICH HAS ARISEN POSES CONSIDERABLE RISK TO DELEGATION REMAINING INTACT. COMMITTEE HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO ORGANIZE ITSELF AND EACH MEMBER HAS INDEPENDENT VIEWS. CONGRESSMAN HARKIN HAS INSISTED THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO TAKE DON LUCE, NOTORIOUS ANTI-GVN ACTIVIST, AS HIS OWN STAFF MEMBER. SEVERAL CONGRESSMEN, INCLUDING CEDERBERG (WHO UNFORTUNATELY WAS NOT PRESENT AT MEETING, BUT WITH WHOM I SPOKE AFTER THE MEETING), ARE ADAMANTLY OPPOSED TO HAVING LUCE ACCOMPANY GROUP. CEDERBERG HAS INDICATED HE WILL TAKE UP ISSUE WITH FRASER TOMORROW MORNING AND WE HOPE MATTER CAN BE PUT TO REST.

4. YOU SHOULD KNOW POSSIBILITY EXISTS SENATE BUSINESS RELATED TO ENERGY BILL AND POSSIBLE OVERRIDE VETO COULD OBLIGE POSTPONEMENT OF TRIP.

5. DESPITE THESE PROBLEMS, AND POSSIBILITY THAT WE COULD LOSE SOME OF THOSE ALREADY COMMITTED TO PARTICIPATE-- AS WE HAVE LOST SENATOR CASE AND REPRESENTATIVES BROOMFIELD AND FASCELL, WE ARE PROCEEDING WITH PLANNING FOR FRIDAY DEPARTURE. BOTH GVN AND GKR HAVE PROMISED FULLEST COOPERATION. MAW

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